diagnostic work upon the thorax and the alimentary system. In each of these sections there are considerable additions to the subject-matter of the first edition—present-day methods of dealing with war injuries receiving a good deal of attention by the author.

The illustrations, many of which are new, are very well reproduced, and reflect great credit upon the producers. We regret the omission of the bibliography; it is presumably intended to insert it in part ii., "Radio-therapeutics," but the size of the work warrants the division of the bibliography into two parts.

We notice that this book has been adopted by the U.S. Army and Navy Medical Departments. Whatever may be said as to the official recognition in this country of the significance of X-ray work, either on the diagnostic or the therapeutic side, and of the status of the medical radiologist, the appearance of this book leaves no doubt in one's mind that the study and practice of radiography are on a sound basis, an excellent foundation, in fact, for the structure of a British School of Radiology.

OUR BOOKSHELF.

The Gate of Remembrance: The Story of the Psychological Experiment which resulted in the Discovery of the Edgar Chapel at Glastonbury. By F. B. Bond. Pp. x+176. (Oxford: B. H. Blackwell, 1918.) Price 6*s*. net.

This little book furnishes an interesting record of a series of psychological investigations directed to elucidate certain hitherto unsolved questions in connection with the Glastonbury excavations. In 1907 Mr. F. B. Bond, in anticipation of his appointment to supervise the work, enlisted the aid of a friend, called "J. A.," both being members of the Psychical Research Society, and associated with the secretary in the inquiry. The object was to discover the site of the Edgar Chapel, which seems to have existed in the time of Queen Elizabeth, but which has now passed out of memory. Both the friends made a preliminary study of the monastic chronicles and other literature of the subject. They held numerous meetings, "J. A." grasping a pencil over a sheet of paper, and Mr. Bond resting his hand on that of his friend. By this method a number of scripts were recorded, some containing rudely drawn plans, purporting to be communications from one "Johannes Monachus," "Whyttinge, nuper Abbas," and others, who gave information by which, we are told, the position of the lost Edgar Chapel was determined.

It is obvious that Mr. Bond and "J. A." have compiled the record in perfect good faith, and they have pointed out errors of fact and style in the communications. They do not regard the communications as "the action of discarnate intelligences from the outside upon the physical or nervous organisation of the sitters." "J. A." is "disposed to concur with Mr. Bond in the view that the subconscious part of the mind may in its operation traverse the limitations of individual knowledge, either acting telepathically through contact with some larger field of memory, or as itself part of a larger unit of a more pervasive kind as regards time and space, conditions which would imply that the individual may have powers of self-expression far greater than those which are normally available through the brain-mechanism controlled by the will and logical faculties." This may be so, but others may prefer to attribute the manifestations to unconscious cerebration working on the authors' historical studies. Apart from its psychological interest, the excellent series of plans and sketches adds to the archæological value of the book.

The British Journal Photographic Almanac and Photographer's Daily Companion, 1918. Edited by George E. Brown. Fifty-seventh issue. Pp. 660. (London: Henry Greenwood and Co., Ltd.) Price 1*s*. 6*d*. net.

The general character of this annual is so well preserved that it needs an actual comparison with the pre-war issues to discover that it is reduced to about half its normal size. Although the "Epitome of Progress" for last year is somewhat curtailed, this is compensated for in great measure by condensing the abstracts and giving references. There has been so much talk with regard to rendering this country independent of foreign factories, so far as some of the more costly chemical preparations are concerned, that one naturally seeks for evidence of progress in this direction. It is satisfactory to note that the Ilford Company is now able to supply certain pure dyes prepared under the direction of Prof. W. J. Pope, of Cambridge University. It mentions a "considerable number" useful for the making of colour filters of all kinds, stains for microscopy, etc., and it is claimed that they are superior to the pre-war German products. Among the latest introductions are pinacyanol and pinaverdol, now called sensitol red and sensitol green respectively; sensitol violet, which is an entirely new panchromatic sensitiser; and filter yellow A. These, with metol and amidol (made by the firm of Johnson and Sons), and various metol substitutes, the compositions of which are not stated, show that a good deal has already been done. Perhaps the second most notable item is the rise in the price of photographic plates. Before the war the popular one shilling a dozen for quarter-plates was increased by 25 per cent., and now, by successive steps, the shilling has risen to two shillings and ninepence.

Memento Oppermann à l'Usage des Ingénieurs, Architectes, Agents Voyers, Conducteurs de Travaux, Mécaniciens, Industriels, Entrepreneurs. Pp. 268. (Paris et Liège: Ch. Béranger.) Price 6 fr.

This is a pocket-book for engineers, surveyors, and architects, and contains the information usually given in similar works published in this

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country. Only a few remarks are called for. The section on surveying includes a good description of the methods and instruments usually employed in the measurement of land, and gives specimen pages of field books. In the part dealing with weights and measures there are tables not only of the metric system, the use of which is now general throughout France, but also of various old French denominations, which, if not used at the present time in commerce or science, are at least often met with in legal documents. Particulars of the weights and measures of foreign countries are also given, and so far as regards the English system these are generally accurate. The compiler is not, however, aware that the metric carat of 200 mg. is the only legal unit of weight in this country for diamonds and precious stones, as he gives the equivalent of the obsolete English carat on p. 41. The troy weights mentioned on p. 44 are not, as there stated, used in this country by chemists; we have a special apothecaries' weight. On the whole, the work bears evidence of careful compilation, and is likely to prove useful to the professional men to whom it particularly appeals.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

[The Editor does not hold himself responsible for opinions expressed by his correspondents. Neither can he undertake to return, or to correspond with the writers of, rejected manuscripts intended for this or any other part of NATURE. *No notice is taken of anonymous communications.]*

Patents and Scientific Research.

IN connection with the excellent article on "Patents and Scientific Research" in NATURE of February 21, may I direct the attention of your readers to another article on the same subject published in *Science Progress* of January, 1914? Both articles must be read if any attempt is to be made to fit the patent system on to scientific research.

In my opinion, however, much the best way to encourage high intellectual effort of all kinds would be to establish a national pension fund for men whose work in any line has been of benefit to large numbers of the public without being remunerative to themselves, or, as sometimes happens, while being of actual pecuniary disadvantage to themselves. I have suggested this idea over and over again, but regret that I cannot get anyone to pay attention to it. For Britain, the present Civil List Pensions should be converted into such a pension scheme as I suggest. The pensions, which I anticipate would scarcely amount to more than 20,000*l.* a year altogether for Britain, ought to be allotted by a standing committee with a paid office—somewhat in the manner of the Nobel prizes. Of course, decision on rival merits of possible candidates may often be difficult, but the same difficulties now present themselves to all learned societies in allotting medals and other honours, and also to the Premier in allotting Civil List Pensions.

Yet another method is to admit the precedent of Jenner, who received 30,000*l.* on petitioning Parliament. I tried this method, as a test of the intelligence of the country, before the war (see *Science Progress,* October, 1915); but the present Premier, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, refused to allow my petition to go forward, although my lawyers assured me that it was a perfectly valid one.

At present the British nation is paying large sums of money to supply junior scientific workers with laboratory facilities and small salaries for doing pot-boiler scientific work in the hope of possibly making some discovery in the future, while it gives nothing whatever to those who have already done work of established and even universal value. I wonder why our countrymen find it so difficult to understand such simple ideas.

RONALD ROSS,
Editor of *Science Progress.*

36 Harley House, London, N.W.1, March 4.

Whale-meat in War Time.

AN announcement in the daily Press states that whale-meat furnished the principal article of food at a luncheon given in New York by the American Museum of Natural History to demonstrate the possibilities of whale-meat for home consumption, in order that the beef thus saved might be sent by America to relieve the scarcity prevailing among the Allies in Europe.

All who were privileged to partake of this luncheon must have gone away satisfied that the substitution of this meat for beef and mutton would entail no hardship, but, on the contrary, would prove a welcome addition to the bill of fare. This at any rate is the conclusion arrived at by members of the staff of the British Museum of Natural History, who have recently experimented with the flesh of a white-beaked dolphin stranded on the Suffolk coast.

Unfortunately, we can do little to assist in this saving, for the whales in our home-waters cannot be "fished," since neither ships nor men are available for the purpose. Similarly, lack of tonnage prevents importation from the Antarctic waters and elsewhere under cold storage.

It is to be hoped, however, that the fullest possible use will be made of the carcasses of the various species of Cetacea stranded around our coasts. Of course, no great quantity of meat would thus be obtained, but locally it should form a very welcome addition to the scanty meat rations now of necessity prevailing.

Whale-meat has no fat, but is encased in a thick layer of "blubber," which, when boiled down with water, yields a large quantity of clear, amber-coloured oil, just now very precious. It has, however, a slight and rather unpleasant odour, but it should not be difficult to eliminate this.

The dark red colour of whale-meat is likely to arouse prejudice against it. But if those who have opportunity will only make trial of its qualities as a food, they will find it scarcely distinguishable from beef, and quite as palatable. Such experiments may well create a demand for this meat after the war. This should lead to a revival of the now extinct Dundee whaling industry, remodelled after the methods followed by the Norwegians, in whose hands modern whaling now almost entirely rests. The difficulty of finding suitable gunners could easily be overcome by employing men trained in the Navy. Many new industries will arise among us after the war. This may well be among the number. It is ridiculous to suppose that we are unable to master the requirements of modern whaling; but, as matters now stand, British whaling companies have to depend for their principal officers on Norwegians. There is no reason why this state of things should continue.

W. P. PYCRAFT.

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